

**Commission Members****Public Members**

Holly Mitchell, Chair
Los Angeles

Elmy Bermejo
San Francisco

Lindy DeKoven
Los Angeles

Cheryl Kendrick
San Diego

Marilyn Kizziah
Beverly Hills

Elena Ong
Los Angeles

Roberta Shouse
San Bernardino

Helen Waukazoo
San Francisco

Rita Cameron Wedding
Sacramento

Legislative Members

Sheila Kuehl
Senate, 23rd District

Deborah Ortiz
Senate, 6th District

Nell Soto
Senate, 32nd District

Gloria Negrete McLeod
Assembly, 61st District

Cindy Montañez
Assembly, 39th District

Fran Pavley
Assembly, 41st District

Statutory Members

Michelle Zumot
*Representing the
Superintendent of Public
Instruction*

Robert Jones, Interim
Labor Commissioner
*Div. of Labor Standards
Enforcement*

Executive Director

About the Commission

The **California Commission on the Status of Women** has the largest constituency of any organization, agency or department in State Government. Representing over 50% of California's population — it is the only agency specifically dedicated to protecting the interests of California women and girls — ensuring women have equal rights and opportunity and that enacted legislation does not discriminate against women or otherwise undermine their status or their opportunities.

Established in 1965 as an Advisory Commission under former Governor Pat Brown, then signed into law as a permanent Commission by former Governor Ronald Reagan in 1971, the Commission is charged to study, recommend, and advise the Governor and the Legislature on inequities in laws, practices and conditions that affect women. Commissioners are appointed by the Governor, the President Pro Tem of the Senate, and the Speaker of the Assembly. The Superintendent of Public Education and the Labor Commissioner are statutory members. As an independent state agency, it does not duplicate the work of any other agency or organization in either the public or private sector.

The Commission supports public policies that meet the needs of women and girls throughout California. Among the Commission's priorities is particular concern for the needs of the underserved, including those with limited English language ability, women in correctional facilities, and the working poor. A significant result of that advocacy is often cost avoidance for the State of California. (For example, given the fact that 80% of teen parents become welfare recipients, funding for teen pregnancy prevention programs saves the state money in the long run.)

- OVER -

To carry out its mandate, the Commission:

- ◆ Holds hearings on issues impacting women. In 2004-05, co-sponsorship with the Assembly Select Committee on Human Trafficking of two **Informational Hearings on Human Trafficking**; co-sponsored with California NOW a hearing **Tragedy in the Family Courts: Child Custody and Sexual Abuse**. Cosponsored hearings with Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE) including: **Are the California Community Colleges Serving the Educational and Vocational Needs of Latinas?** (2004), **The Impact of Budget Cuts on Latinas** (2003) as part of their annual Latina Action Day. Additionally, co-sponsored a **Legislative Briefing on Women's Health** (2003) in partnership with the California Women's Health Care Partnership. Additional briefings include **Women and Girls in the Criminal Justice System** (2001) and **Gender Equity in Education** (2001).
- ◆ Conducts research and publishes reports on issues related to women. Publications include **Understanding Child Care: A Primer for Policy Makers**, in partnership with the Institute for Research on Women and Families. In May 2002, the Commission collaborated with The Women's Foundation of California on **Failing to Make Ends Meet: A Report on the Economic Status of Women in California**.
- ◆ Provides testimony and participates in public and legislative committee hearings. Conducts presentations, assists in workshops, and **advises** other agencies and women's organizations **on issues affecting women and girls**.
- ◆ Initiates and supports statewide women's networks in providing positive direction on issues of importance to women. In 2004, co-sponsored with the California Women's Agenda the **Moving the Agenda for California Women 2005, a Beijing + 10 Conference**. Sponsored the **2002 Association of California Commissions for Women Annual Convention**.
- ◆ Reviews all bills introduced in each legislative session, advising the Governor, the Legislature and the public on the pros and cons of **legislation significant to women**. Publishes an annual Summary of New Laws Affecting Women and disseminates periodic updates and alerts on important issues.
- ◆ Participates, monitors, and **appoints members to the State Advisory Committee on Sexual Assault Victim Services and Prevention Programs** in conjunction with the Office of Emergency Services.
- ◆ Serves as a founding cosponsor for the annual **Working Families Policy Summit**. Developed and presented recommendations on Workplace Policies for 2003 Summit.
- ◆ Participates in efforts to improve women's opportunities in the workplace, including the **Blue Ribbon Committee on Women in Apprenticeship** and the **California Coalition on Older Working Women**.
- ◆ Promotes and supports implementation of **pay equity** within State government and in the private sector.
- ◆ Collaborates with more than 100 other organizations in California, including the **California Women's Health Care Partnership**, to address issues impacting women.

For more information about the Commission visit www.women.ca.gov.

